

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF JOHN JAMES AUDUBON AND SPENCER F. BAIRD.

BY RUTHVEN DEANE.

III.¹

AUDUBON TO BAIRD.

New York, Nov. 29, 1842.

My dear Young Friend,

It seems to me as if an age had already elapsed since I have heard of you or your whereabouts. Neither do I know clearly whether in the way of correspondence, you are in my debt, or I am in yours. Nevertheless I now write to you, and request you to read this letter more than once, and think deeply on the purport of its contents that you may be the [more] able to form a true Idea of what I intend to say [to] you, and for yourself to give me a true answer, and on which I can depend, no matter whether it is to my liking or not.

It is now determined that I shall go towards the Rocky Mountains at least to the Yellowstone River, and up the latter Stream four hundred of miles, and *perhaps* go across the Rocky Mountains. I have it in my power to proceed to the Yellowstone by Steamer from St. Louis on the 1st day of April next; or to go to the "*Mountains of the Wind*" in the very heart and bosom of the Rocky Mountains in the company of Sir William Drummond Stewart,² Baronet who will leave on the 1st of May next also from St. Louis.

It has occurred to me that perchance you would like to spare a few months of your life, to visit the great Western Wilderness, and perhaps again prefer going in my Company in preference to that of any other person? Of this of course I cannot Judge without your answer to this. I thought that you would have been in New York long ere this, but not a Word of you has reached any friend of yours here for several months. I have had an abundance of applications from different sections of the country, from Young

¹ For Parts I and II see Auk, Vol. XXIII, 1906, pp. 194-209 and 318-334.

² William Drummond Stewart (7th Bart.); born 1795, died 1871.

Gents who proffer much efficiency, etc., but I do not know them as I know you, and if the terms which I am about to propose to you will answer your own views, I wish you to write to me at once so that I may know how to prepare myself for such a Journey, and under such circumstances.

Would you like to go with me at any rate? By which I mean, whether by Land, or by Water, and undertake, besides acting towards me as a friend, to prepare whatever skins of Birds or Quadrupeds, I may think fit for us to bring home. The Birds, you might have one half as your own, the Quadrupeds, (should you wish it) you might a 4th or every 4th specimen of the same species, reserving to myself all that is new or exceedingly new.

I will procure and furnish *all the materials* for skinning, preparing, and saving whatever we may find in Ornithology and in Mammalia, and in all probability (if you think it absolutely necessary) pay one half your expenses from the time we leave St. Louis until our return to that city. You will have to work hard, of course; but then I trust that the knowledge alone which you must acquire would prove a sufficient compensation, and as you already know me pretty well, I need not say to you that I am not hard on the nigger.

It will be necessary for you to provide a good double barrelled Gun, and an excellent Rifle, Shot bag, powder flask, &c, a good hatchet, and a sufficiency of clothes for something like a 12 month's Campaign. But if you will write to me at once upon the subject, I can give you a more and a better a / c of all my intentions, than is at present necessary.

If all goes on as I trust it will go on, we may be back home by Octr. or Novr. next, 1843.¹

Do not lose a moment in writing to me in answer to this after you have thought *deeply* upon the matter.

Remember me kindly to all your friends, and believe me,

Yours Always,

John J. Audubon.

77 Williams Street, New York.

¹ The Missouri River Expedition occupied the period between March 11, 1843, and November 6 of the same year. Baird did not accompany Audubon. He had corresponded with him four months before on this same subject, as shown in a letter which I published in 'The Auk' (Vol. XXI, April, 1904), stating that nothing would delight him more than to go, if he could afford it.— R. D.

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Washington, November 24th, 1843.

My dear Mr. Audubon

It has been with the greatest pleasure that I have heard by the papers of your safe arrival in a civilized part of the country, with your collections in all departments of Natural History.¹ That these have been extensive I can have not the least doubt, as you are not a person to be idle when anything is to be done. From time to time short notices of your whereabouts and doings, appeared in the newspaper and a thousand times I wished that the fears of my friends had not prevented me from accompanying you to the scenes of action. Will you not, if you have time, write & tell me what your success has been, and what new birds & beasts you have discovered? Nothing but vague rumors have reached me of these matters. Is there anything I can do for you here? Will you not be on yourself after the meeting of Congress?. Please enclose anything for me under cover to "Charles B. Penrose,² Solicitor of the Treasury, Washington."

Yours Sincerely

Spencer F. Baird.

John J. Audubon Esq.

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Carlisle, March 9th, 1844.

My dear Mr. Audubon

I would have replied ere this to your last two letters, but for waiting for further information respecting the Pennant's Marten. I have at last got a full account of the animal, its price &c. The owner is very unwilling to part with it, having formed the most extravagant ideas of its value and rarity. He has already realized a considerable sum of money by exhibiting it in Harrisburg, and intends making a tour through the neighboring towns for the same purpose. He however said that I might have it for ten dollars, if I would pay for the box he had made to contain it. The box is large, and convenient, having iron bars on one side, & iron fasten-

¹ Missouri River expedition, which occupied the time between March 11 and November 6, 1843.

² Charles B. Penrose of Pennsylvania, Solicitor of the Treasury from 1841 to 1845, appointed to Office by President William H. Harrison.

ings on the other, with a sliding door to shut it up completely. This cost 5 dollars? The man says he has not got the skin of the old one but will try and get it, he thinks he can do so, when he will let me have it with the live one. If therefor you conclude you want the Marten, please to send me the 15 dollars which can be done in a letter. I had hoped to have been able to have purchased it and presented it to you; but the price is far above my present means having used up all my "spare change" during an expensive three months absence from home. I can send it very safely to Philadelphia, as I have a very obliging acquaintance among the forwarding merchants here, who goes down himself twice every week, and who would take great pleasure in feeding the animal on the road and delivering it safely at Hall Brothers. I have some skins collected here which are at your service. They are *Sciurus Cinereus*?¹ ferruginous above & black beneath, *Lepus Sylvaticus*,² & a very rough specimen of *Hystrix dorsata*³ caught in Clearfield Co. Penn. I do not notice in your list of birds to be published in your supplement the *Turdus Minor* of Gm.⁴ indicated in Fauna Bor. Am. It is certainly a well characterised species and abundant in our mountains in spring. It comes with Wilson's thrush but in a tenfold number. I can send you very good specimens if you wish them. How are your new birds to be published and if in the small edition, can they be bought separately. You ask whether I shall be in New York before you go to Boston. I shall not leave Carlisle for several months. It is exceedingly probable that I shall go on a long threatened trip to the coal regions of Schuylkill Co. this summer. If I do I hope to render you some tangible evidence of my having been there in the shape of specimens and notes. Hoping to hear from you soon I remain

Yours Sincerely

Spencer F. Baird.

John J. Audubon Esq.
77 William St.
New York.

¹ *Sciurus niger* Linn.

² *Lepus floridanus mallurus* Thomas.

³ *Erethizon dorsatum* Linn.

⁴ *Turdus fuscescens*: In the early days "mix up" on the genus *Turdus*, "Swainson called it *T. minor* after Gmelin, and applies the name *wilsonii* erroneously to *T. swainsonii*." (Bds. N. A.)

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Carlisle March 16, 1844.

My dear Mr. Audubon.

I have the Pennant's Marten¹ safely in my possession having just returned from Harrisburg with it, whither I had gone for the purpose of procuring it. It seems in very good health, and is without exception the most unmitigatedly savage beast I ever saw. The Royal Bengal Tiger, or the Laughing Hyena are neither of them circumstances to it. It goes through all the motions of a mad cat, particularly when a dog comes near, — spitting, hissing, growling etc.

All the account I was able to procure respecting the animal was the following. It was found in company with an older one, in Peter's mountain, six miles above Harrisburg about five weeks ago. After a most desperate resistance the old one was killed, having beaten off a large pack of dogs, to whose assistance the hunters were obliged to run. This individual ran up a tree, and being stoned by the men, jumped off to a distance of forty feet! when being a little stunned by the leap they ran up quickly and threw their coats over it, and then secured it. The old one measured three feet and a half from nose to end of tail, and was about one third larger than this.

I am looking out for a good chance to send the Marten on to you which I hope will be early next week. There will be cars going on Monday & Tuesday, to Philadelphia, but on Wednesday a man goes down with his own car to whom I can entrust it safely to feed and water.

I will send on a few other skins I have here with the Marten. A small shrew from Cape May, Squirrel, etc. If they leave on Wednesday they will arrive on Thursday evening it taking two

¹ In the 'Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America,' under the article on Pennant's Marten, Audubon writes: "The specimen from which the figure of our plate was drawn, was taken alive in some part of the Alleghany Mountains, in the State of Pennsylvania, and we soon afterwards received a letter from our esteemed friend, Spencer F. Baird Esq., of Carlisle, in that State, informing us of its having been captured, which enabled us, through that gentleman, to purchase it. His letter was dated March 16, 1844."

days to go. I will send a notice of the transmission to Hall Brothers¹ when I send it off.

Yours sincerely

Spencer F. Baird.

John J. Audubon Esq.
77 William St.
New York.

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Carlisle August 4th. 1845.

My dear Mr. Audubon

It is with sincerest regret that I see by the papers that your copper plates² were injured or perhaps ruined by the fire which occurred a few weeks ago. Various reports are circulated respecting your loss, and among so many contradictory ones it is difficult to get at the truth of the case. Might I ask you to let me know the truth of the matter. I would have answered your last letter long ago, but was waiting for information respecting the Northern hare, for which I have applied to several persons in different parts of the state. None has come in yet, but I hope to get some before long. The animal is not found in this county & is very rare in the one north of this. In Huntingdon Centre, Clearfield Co. they are more common. I wrote to my friend in Texas about the large prairie hare, & I hope he will be able to render the proper account of it. I called his attention also to the other quadrupeds of the country, and I hope to hear from him soon, & expect that he will

¹ Hall Bros., Merchants and Importers, 43 Beaver St., New York.

² The copper-plates, engraved by Robert Havell, for the folio edition of 'Birds of America,' were stored in a New York warehouse in 1845, where many of them were seriously damaged by fire. Miss M. R. Audubon writes me that in 1851-52, when her grandfather's new house was built, a fireproof vault, detached from the other buildings, was put up for them, and there they remained until after the death of her father in 1862, when they were sold. Two of these plates, in perfect condition, are now in Miss Audubon's home at Salem, N. Y. They represent the Great White Heron and Snow Goose. Six plates, in the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, D. C., represent the Robin, Chuck-wills-widow, Bob-white, Great Blue Heron, Scarlet Ibis, and Whooping Crane. Nine plates, in the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, represent the Canada Goose, Hutchins's Goose, Mallard, Turkey (female), Loon, Snowy Owl, Hawk Owl, Harris's Hawk, and Black-footed Albatross. There are several other plates in private hands at Ansonia, Conn. (R. D.)

remain some time longer. Is there any particular point to which you wish his attention directed. With my best respects to all your kind family I remain

Yours Sincerely

Spencer F. Baird.

P.S.

I forgot to say that I have been elected professor of Natural History in Dickinson College. The situation is entirely nominal however, nothing to do & no salary whatever.

John J. Audubon. F. R. S.

77 William St.

New York.

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Carlisle Sept. 26. 1845.

My dear Mr. Audubon

I hasten to communicate to you some information which I have obtained of the Northern hare, although in all probability you are well acquainted with what I have to say. My informant is Mr. Andrew H. Rose of Silver Lake Susquehanna Co. Penn., where game of all kinds is abundant. He is now in Carlisle, and any queries you might make respecting the animal, on subjects not mentioned in his communication, he could answer to your satisfaction. Among the animals in his neighborhood, he speaks of a Catamount!!, a varmint twice as large as the wild cat, tail 18 inches long, and unspotted. i. e. the body. Very different from the young panther, with which he is well acquainted. There was a skin in his neighborhood, which he has written for. He is not very sanguine of getting it, if it is not procurable his brother will try very hard to get another. He promises me skins of Wild Cats, Cross foxes, Fishers, a Red Squirrel, twice as large as a Chickaree, living in deep swamps, and Hares in various plumages. He killed several Silver Foxes, last winter and will try and get one if possible. He says they bring 35 dollars from the dealers in Montrose. If I should be so fortunate as to get anything interesting through him it shall be sent on immediately, as my sole object in

collecting quadrupeds is to put them into your hands. I have been thinking very seriously of going to Texas this winter for some months, and possibly nothing but the want of money will prevent me. An acquaintance is anxious for me to pay his uncle a visit, who resides in summer on Galveston Bay, in winter about 100 miles along on Trinity River. I shall keep a sharp lookout for quadrupeds if I go. Please present my best respects to your family, and believe me as ever

Yours Most Sincerely

Spencer F. Baird.

Memoranda of the Nat. Hist. of *Lepus americanus*, Erx.

In cold weather found in Laurel swamps. Never seen in large open woods, nor in extensive clearings. In summer in bushy places near clover patches, in the edges of which they have their nests. Young from three to five, gray. Nest sometimes under a log, made of leaves and some fur. Feed on clover in summer, on bark of birch, beech, wild poplar, and striped maple. Change in November, and April. Two very rarely seen together. Caught in snows in great quantity, during winter, and sent to New York. Worth from 8 to 10 cents in Susquehanna Co. Favorite time of running is on moonlight nights. Never burrow. Run very rapidly, leaping from 5 to 8 feet or even more when pursued, more faster than Foxhound, but are caught by Grey-hounds. Have favorite paths for crossing over roads, or from one patch of woods to another. In winter they form a beaten track six or more inches in the snow. When pursued by hounds they soon double and come back to place from which they started. When chased they will often mount up on a small knoll in woods, and listen and watch for their pursuers. If whistled at when running, they will stop for an instant. Preyed on by Wild Cats, Foxes, Weasels, Hawks, Eagles, Owls &c. Foxes have been known to hunt them in pairs, one chasing, the other watching near a crossing place. Very abundant, 10 to 50 may be seen in a day. Common rabbit very rare, their existence traditionary.

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Carlisle Dec. 29, 1845.

My dearest Mr. Audubon

It is with no ordinary feeling of pleasure that I received your kind Christmas gift in the shape of a letter written on the 25th, than which, few things in this world could have pleased me more. I would have answered the preceeding one long before, had I not been waiting for something to write in answer to your queries. As to procuring a specimen of the Catamount and Black Fox in the flesh, it is an exceedingly difficult matter. I however will do what I can. Of course none are to be procured in this vicinity. I however write today to Mr. Andrew Rose of Silver Lake Susquehanna Co. Pa., who is now at home, for the purpose of inducing him to make every effort to procure one or both animals. He has several times spoken to me of the black fox as being occasionally captured in his vicinity and when he went up home a few weeks ago, promised to get me one if possible. He, I have no doubt, will make every effort to get it, as well as the other, if it really has a veritable existence. My friend Charles Churchill son of Col. Churchill wrote to a friend of his in Burlington, Vt. for a similar purpose, whether one could be procured in the flesh and on what terms, also to collect every information respecting the habits and manners of the Fisher &c. You ask me how I have been employing my time. I have been occupied this winter principally in studying modern languages, German, Spanish and Italian in which I hope I made some progress. Besides this I draw a little every day, principally sketches of boxes, tubs, boats, castles &c. not from nature. My principal object is to be able to copy off some of the beautiful landscapes which I am constantly meeting with in my walks. I visited a spot last summer about 18 miles from Carlisle, whence a surface of about 1500 square miles of cultivated valley was visible at one glance.

A line of very near 100 miles could be traced in the length of the valley. The rest of my time is occupied by mathematics general reading & visiting a young lady. I have been for some time studying out our little flycatchers, and have come pretty nearly to the conclusion that my *Tyrannula minima* is very like Swainson's *T.*

pusilla. His figure and description are different from my bird, but both are vague enough to allow of considerable latitude of interpretation. I can only decide the matter by looking at your plate of *pusilla*. Do you still think that *Tyrannula richardsonii* is a good species? In about 20 specimens of *T. fusca* which I possess, there is every gradation in size, color, & proportion of quills between the descriptions of *Fusca* and *richardsonii*. If there is any infallible distinctive character, please mention it to me. The eggs and habits appear at any rate to be very different from their descriptions.

If I have time I will write out a monograph of our Flycatchers for the Proceedings of the Academy of Nat. Sciences, for the purpose of giving the correct names of Giraud's Texan species.¹ [His *Muscicapa Texensis* for instance is nothing but the old *M. cayanensis* of Brisson² & Gmelin, *M. flava* of Vieillot,³ and so of others. If my purse is deep enough towards the end of the winter, I may possibly be able to meet you & talk over these matters. In the mean time Believe me to be, with my respects to Mrs. A. and all your family

Yours most affectionately

Spencer F. Baird.

John J. Audubon Esq.
77 William St.
New York.

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Carlisle Feb. 4th, 1846.

My dear Mr. Audubon

I am sorry to be obliged to report such ill success in getting the animals you wished, although I have done everything in my power. My friend who went to Susquehanna Co. returned without anything more than a box of Salmon trout and a few *Lepus americanus*, which are so abundant. By the way I do not want you to consider

¹ 'A Description of Sixteen New Species of North American Birds,' 1841. *Muscicapa texensis*, folio 5, pl. 1.

² 'Ornithologia sive Synopsis Methodica.' 1760. *Muscicapa cayanensis*, Vol. II, p. 404.

³ 'Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux de l'Amerique Septentrionale' 1807. *Muscicapa flava*, pl. 41.

the account of the habits of this hare, which I obtained from him and sent to you, as gospel. I have since that time discovered that he occasionally invents stories about animals in lack of true bills. So you may only believe what you please & think probable. He says that the catamounts skin was not to be found anywhere, and it seems that his black or silver foxes are cross foxes.

My friend Charles Churchill wrote to a gentleman in Burlington named Henry Loomis¹ who has been in the fur business, for information respecting foxes. He says that it would be impossible to procure one in Vermont in the flesh, but that it might be done through the Quebec agents of the Hudson's bay fur Co., or in Maine. It would cost a great deal however. He has paid from 9 to 35 dollars for skins. Mr. Thompson in his *Gazetteer*² of Vermont speaks of those in Mr. Loomis' possession. This gentleman refers to the copious accounts of the different foxes, martens &c. in Thompson's *Gazetteer* of Vermont, as well worthy of credit, as he contributed many of them from personal knowledge. He added one fact which Thompson has omitted, viz. with respect to the *Mustela Pennanti* it being a source of great injury to the Pine Marten Hunters.

One has been known to follow the line of traps for miles, partially eating the captured Martens, thereby damaging or entirely destroying the skins. They have a very disagreeable odor when improperly skinned, worse than that of the mink. They frequently spring the Marten traps, and then eat the bait, being to cunning to enter them before, so say the hunters. I have spoken and written to several other persons for various information which I will communicate as soon as it arrives. A friend is now in Erie Co. where I hope he will learn something. With my best respects to all your kind family, and congratulations to Victor³ I remain

Ever yours affectionately

Spencer F. Baird.

¹ A native of Burlington, Vt., born Aug. 31, 1818; died Dec. 18, 1886. Mr. Chas. E. Allen of Burlington, Vt., writes me that Mr. Loomis was a much respected citizen, entered into business before he was of age, and was an earnest and active promoter of the welfare of his native town, officiating as Trustee of the University of Vermont and President of the Burlington Savings Bank for thirty years. (R. D.)

² A *Gazetteer* of the State of Vermont, 1824, by Zadock Thompson, born May 23, 1796, died 1856.

³ Victor Gifford Audubon.

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Carlisle Feb. 26th, 1846.

My dear Mr. Audubon.

Coming through Harrisburg last Saturday on my way home after a three months absence, I heard that there was a "curious varmint" to be seen by the curious on payment of a "levy" in good money. I hastened thither and having with some effort fished out the coin from a collection of miscellanea existing in my breeches pocket, I tendered it, and, it on examination proving to be genuine, I was admitted to a sight of his highness. It proved to be a fine specimen of Pennant's Marten. It had been caught a few weeks ago, about ten miles above Harrisburg, in company with its mother who was despatched by the dogs, after making a most desperate resistance. The old one was said to have been about the size of a pointer dog. The young one is as large nearly as the *Lepus Americanus*. It is very savage, and emits a rather strong musky odor. It had been my intention to get it and send it on to you, but on inquiry, the price somewhat dampened my arder. Ten dollars was what the owners said that they had given for it, and they expected an additional sum to repay them for the trouble it had cost them. How are you off for these critters? & what shall be done about it.

Will you not be a little surprised, as I was, to hear of my having procured a fine adult specimen of *Lestris Pomarinus*,¹ shot a few years ago in summer or fall at Harrisburg. There is not the slightest question as to its having really been shot there, and in addition I am assured that their occurrence there is not rare. I was told some time ago of "gulls" of a dark color had been seen resting on the water with very long tails, but this I always set down as rather apocryphal. Facts and specimens however are stubborn things.

How do you come on with your figuring of new species of Birds. I have never yet been able to learn what your species procured last summer were.

¹ There is a specimen in the Baird collection at the Smithsonian Institution, Cat. No. 1275, labelled "Harrisburg, summer of 1839, Dr. John Fager." Dr. John Henry Fager was one of the first physicians of Harrisburg, Pa., and also much interested in birds and flowers, born May 31, 1805, died Aug. 18, 1872.

I have made drawings of the skulls of several of our quadrupeds which are at your service if you want them. They are Mink, Wild Cat, Ground Hog, *Lepus Sylvaticus*,¹ *Neotoma Floridana* and others. I have got a Camera Lucida now and intend trying to draw with it. Anything I can do in this way for you will be cheerfully done.

Yours Sincerely

Spencer F. Baird.

John J. Audubon Esq.
77 William St.
New York.

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Carlisle Nov. 4, 1846.

Dear Mr. Audubon

I have been intending to write for a long time, to find out how you all are at Minnie's Landing,² and how yourself is particularly, but have put it off from time to time for various reasons. I can do so no longer, but must beg you to let me know these particulars.

Since my last visit to you, two pretty important events have happened to me. The first was getting married,³ the second, settling down steadily in my Professional chair.⁴ My wife is the only daughter of Col. Churchill⁵ Inspector Gen. of the Army, now with Gen. Wool⁶ in Mexico. She suits me exactly, being as fond

¹ *Lepus floridanus mallurus* Thomas.

² "Minniesland," now known as Audubon Park, in the present limits of New York City. "The name came from the fact that my father and uncle always used the Scotch name 'Minnie' for mother. The land when bought was deeded to her, and always spoken of as Minnie's land." (See Audubon and his Journals, Vol. I, p. 71.)

³ The following is taken from a file of Carlisle, Pa., papers: "Married: Aug. 8, 1846, in Carlisle, by the Rev. John McClintock, Prof. Spencer F. Baird of Dickinson College, to Mary Helen Churchill, daughter of Col. S. Churchill, Inspector General U. S. Army."

⁴ "In 1845 he was chosen professor of natural history in Dickinson College, and in 1846, his duties and emoluments were increased by election to the chair of natural history and chemistry in the same institution." In 1846 there were about one hundred students in Dickinson College. There was under the immediate supervision of the college faculty a preparatory department or "Grammar School," as it was called, with about half that number of students.

⁵ Col. Sylvester Churchill, born about 1783, died Dec. 1862. Became Inspector General of the Army in 1841.

⁶ General John E. Wool, American General, born about 1789, died about 1869.

of birds & snakes & fishes etc. as myself. I have even given her a lesson or two in taxidermy.

My duties as professor consist in teaching Animal Physiology, Natural Theology & Mathematics. My salary is small \$400 but I hope will be larger hereafter. I have to work hard, but that is good for me.

Please to let me know how the quadrupeds get along. Is the first vol. published? How does John¹ get along in England? What became of his Texas birds?

Please to tell me the address of your friend Ayres.² I have been collecting fishes for some weeks, and wish to correspond & exchange with him on this subject. I can send him a good many species.

Please give my love to all your kind family. My wife (to whom two years ago I gave a picture of yourself, as the most acceptable present) sends hers also, and desires exceedingly to see one to whom her husband owes so many obligations of every kind. Believe me to be ever

Yours most affectionately

Spencer F. Baird.

AUDUBON TO BAIRD.

Minniesland.

Nov. 8th, 1846.

My dear Friend,

We were very happy to hear of your Success in obtaining a Professorship. I wish you had been more minute as to the amount of your Salary as I consider 400\$ as a very small sum. If you have not a house, fuel, and furniture, &c &c &c to compensate for so small a sum, and having so much to perform for it. We are all glad that you have a good helpmate in the shape of a wife, and we would be very glad to have you under our roof, even now; but as the winter is now fast approaching we hope to see you certainly some time next spring, or during the summer, as you know that then our place is worthy to reside at. The fishing is then Capital.

¹ John Woodhouse Audubon.

² W. O. Ayres, Sag Harbor, Long Island, N. Y., for whom Audubon named *Colaptes ayresii*, Birds of America, Vol. VII, 1843. *Colaptes hybridus* of Baird.

The residence of our Friend, W. O. Ayers, is on Long Island, and I think that a letter addressed to him at Sag-Harbor, will be sure to be received by that good Friend of ours.

He will be glad to receive the collection of fishes which you have procured for him, and I know will be most happy to exchange for other fishes or subjects if you should desire any at his hands. Please to give your Dear Lady our best love, and congratulations on her having such a capitally perfect husband. We are all well at present. I have not done anything with the Birds which, indeed, my son Victor has sent to the Academy of Philadelphia. I suppose I need not look any more for a Black Fox in the flesh from you during the next winter.

Consider me always my Dear Friend,

Your most sincerely attached,

John J. Audubon.

Should you procure a black fox, be sure to forward him uncut to our office New York 78 John Street. Adieu, and God bless both you and your Dear Wife.

This is a mistake, I brought them back. V. G. A.

The letter press ¹ will be ready in a few days. I will forward a Copy to you to Philada. from whence you can no doubt easily get it. I will join my Father, dear Mr. Baird, in congratulations, and in sincere wishes for your happiness & welfare.

Yours faithfully,

V. G. Audubon.

BAIRD TO VICTOR G. AUDUBON.

Carlisle Jan. 19, 1847.

My dear Victor

I have been trying for some time past to find time for writing and thanking you all for the copy of the Viviparous text. Never had mortal man such a feast as I in turning over the pages and reading the interesting and copious accounts of the habits of animals, many of which were unknown to me beyond the name. I was

¹ 'The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America,' by John James Audubon and the Rev. John Bachman, D. D. &c. &c. Vol. I, Published by J. J. Audubon, 1846; Vols. II and III, published by V. G. Audubon, 1854.

exceedingly gratified by the kind terms I found myself mentioned throughout the book, more so than I deserve. Be assured that no effort of mine however humble shall be spared to assist in the perfecting a labor so stupendous and important as that in which you are engaged. Would that I could be of more substantial help by sending half a dozen subscribers, I may do so yet, who knows. I found it impossible to get for you a copy of the Berlin transactions containing the elucidations of Hernandez.¹ By the way the volume must be in the Library of the Lyceum, as if I remember aright, it was there I first saw it? If the book remain still unprocurable, I would advise you to import the volume, or the Physical part of the volume. Wiley and Putnam or Radde could do this in six or eight weeks at an expense of not more than about 2.00. I do not remember now whether the vol. was printed in 1827 or whether it contained the proceedings for 1827. In the latter case it could have been printed a year or two later. I have been looking over the Texan birds and find the curved bill Thrush-like bird, and the small spotted woodpecker undescribed, unless it may be in a paper by Cabot on Yucatan birds. It is very different from the bird described by Gambel as *Picus Nuttalli*² from California. I hope to get at them systematically in a few days and see what I can discover about them. I found the other day a dead specimen of a large shrew which seemed referable to *Sorex DeKayi*.³ I put it in spirits at your service. I have been making various skeletons & getting various books for the purpose of studying out the comparative anatomy of our animals. Anything that I may do or learn about American Quadrapeds will be at your service. All your queries respecting animals in your letter of the 26th shall be carefully attended to. I send you some extracts I made from the "Zoology of the Sulphur"⁴ a copy of which belonging to Dr. Wilson⁵ I found at the Academy. There are plates of

¹ Francisco Hernandez, a Spanish physician and naturalist, born Toledo, Spain, 1530, died Madrid, Spain, Jan. 28, 1587.

² *Dryobates nuttallii*.

³ *Blarina brevicauda* Say.

⁴ 'The Zoology of H. M. S. Sulphur,' under Capt. Sir Edward Belcher, during the years 1836-42. London, 1844.

⁵ Thomas Bellerby Wilson, one of the founders of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences in 1812. He presented the Academy with 12,000 books and pamphlets, and with his brother Edward, 26,000 specimens of birds. Born Jan. 17, 1807, died March 15, 1865.

most of the species. Gambel has a specimen of weasel which is intermediate between *Mustela frenata* Licht. and *M. xanthogenys* of Gray in the present extracts. Have you heard lately from John,¹ how does he get along, and when does he return. With my best respects to your father and whole family I remain

Yours as ever

Spencer F. Baird.

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Carlisle, Feb. 8, 1847.

My dear Mr. Audubon

Very much to my astonishment I received last Saturday a letter from Mr. Dana² saying that he had written to Dr. Pickering³ that I would make a good curator of the Smithsonian institute, and advising me if I wished the place to write immediately to Prof. Henry⁴ and enclose my credentials. Now I would like the situation amazingly and write to ask you to make out a flaming recommendation for the place & send me as soon as possible. Say what you please about qualification &c. I would be obliged to you for the exertion of any personal influence you may have on the board of Regents. When there I would hope to be materially useful to you in your labors. I do not think that I replied to your query whether Peale⁵ had published any of the quadrupeds of the exped. or in particular any deer. To the best of my knowledge he has not. Drawings of many species have been made, but nothing published. In an article by Count Castelnau⁶ on his South American travels in the *Comptes Rendus* Vol. 22. No. 23, June 1846, he says that there exists a remarkable difference between the young of the

¹ John Woodhouse Audubon, who was then in Europe with his family, devoting his time to painting pictures for the 'Quadrupeds.'

² James Dwight Dana, Geologist and Mineralogist. Born Feb. 12, 1813, died April 14, 1895.

³ Dr. Charles Pickering, Naturalist of the U. S. Exploring Expedition, under Capt. Charles Wilkes, in 1838-42. Born Nov. 10, 1805, died March 17, 1878.

⁴ Prof. Joseph Henry, elected first Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution Dec. 3, 1846. Born Dec. 17, 1799, died May 13, 1878.

⁵ Titian R. Peale. Accompanied several exploring expeditions as naturalist. Born 1800, died March 13, 1885.

⁶ Francis de Castelnau, who travelled extensively in South America. Born in London, England, 1812; died in Melbourne, Australia, 1880.

Couger, *Felis concolor*, in North and South America, it being spotted in the former, and *unspotted* or uniform in the latter!!
With my best respects to all your kind family Believe me

Yours affectionately

Spencer F. Baird.

BAIRD TO AUDUBON.

Carlisle April 24, 1847.

My dear Mr. Audubon

I received today from Perry County a fine specimen living of a Red Fox. If you want him let me know *immediately* and I will send him on *immediately*. As we have a station of the Phila. & Pittsburg telegraph in Carlisle you might send word by that means, & thus save several days. I hope to get some good quadrupeds this season as I have made extensive arrangements for gathering the small animals. I hope to spend our vacation this summer near Westport N. Y. at the lower end of Lake Champlain, with my wife's uncle Mr. Guy Hunter. He lives in the midst of an unbroken forest and beasts are abundant. I could get you a black fox, either in skin or possibly alive or freshly killed from there. Do you want one now? Weasels, Fishers &c. are plenty there. My wife and I expect to go up about the middle of July. Please present my best respects & love to your family.

Yours affectionately

S. F. Baird.